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POLITICAL WORK AMONG WOMEN IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

An important part of mass political work is work among women. The Political Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, which has investigated the political work among women, has recognized that the Czechoslovak Federation of Women (Ceskoslovensky Svaz Zen) has conducted many valuable programs and done good work. These programs include getting subscriptions to the Stockholm Peace Petition, the preparation and popularization of the Warsaw Congress, peace pledges, the Many Program, recruiting women for production, holding social and cultural meetings and lectures, etc. However, although the Czechoslovak Federation of Women has fulfilled its political objectives as a mass organization, it has shown that its organizational forms are not suited to present needs.

The Czechoslovak Federation of Women has had only a small membership, totaling about 163,000 persons in the Czech Provinces and 150,000 in Slovakia. It has not had sufficient political influence on all the women who take no part in political life. The Czechoslovak Federation of Women has had no organization either in factories or in the agricultural obcasy. The work among women in the villages has been divided among the trade unions of the women members of the United Federation of Czech Farmers (Jednotny Svaz Ceskych Zemedelcu), and in the factories, work among women has not been undertaken vigorously. Since this situation could not continue, it was necessary to consider how the broad masses of women could be recruited for constructive work in the development of Czechoslovakia, and what organizational forms to use to develop among women a great mass movement.

The correct way to conduct and develop political work among women on the broadest possible basis was indicated by the experience of work among women in the USSR, where women's councils are established in the soviets.

In Czechoslovakia also it was necessary to develop political work among women on a broader, and more of a mass basis. The Czechoslovak Federation of Women has been reorganized. The work of women will now be directed by women's committees within the national committees. These women's committees must be established in the local national committees in all obcasy, and in obvod national committees in the

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case of cities which are under the unified national committees and the central national committee. The women's committees will have 2 to 12 members who will be chosen for a one-year term, at public meetings of women convened by the local national committees.

The committees will be made up of the most politically mature and active women working in responsible positions in economic, political, and cultural life. Each committee will be headed by a local national committee member or by the most active woman worker in the locality, and will be appointed by the local national committee. With the approval of the council and of the chairman of the national committee, meetings of the women's committees will be held every 14 days and more often if needed. The council and the chairman of the national committee will assign objectives to the women's committee and will check on their fulfillment. The women's committees will not have individual memberships nor will they collect membership dues.

The main objectives of the women's committees in the cities and in the villages are to propagandize and recruit all women to fight actively for peace. In the villages they are to mobilize the women to insure the fulfillment of the resolutions of the party and the government regarding agriculture, to encourage women cooperative members to increase production, and to lead all women in aiding the JZD (Unified Agriculture Cooperatives). They are to conduct training, social, and cultural clubs, popular lectures, and practical courses. In collaboration with the enlightenment clubs and with reading groups, they are to show films, and in all possible ways are to help raise the political, professional, and cultural qualifications of women. They are to acquaint the women with new Soviet methods of agricultural work and to publicize these methods. They are to recommend and send women to specialized courses, such as courses for agrotechnicians, livestock technicians, tractor operators, etc., to increase the women's qualifications. They are to cooperate closely with consumer cooperatives and to see that socialist trade in the villages conscientiously fulfills the tasks assigned to it. They are to recommend women for responsible positions in public and political life and to check on the results of these recommendations. They are to help establish children's and other social establishments to lighten the work of farm women, help improve household hygiene, help care for children, and improve the appearance of the obshch. They are to establish Societies of Parents and Friends of the School (Sdruzheniye Roditel' i Druzhba Shkoly) and cooperate with them as well as with the schools. The members of the women's committees in the villages are to be selected from the most active women Communists, the most politically mature members of JZD and of mass organizations, the unorganized women, and the members of other political parties.

The women's committees in the cities are to do the party development, political work among women, primarily among those without party affiliation. They are to propagandize and mobilize the women to insure the fulfillment of the resolutions of the party and the government, and they will recruit them for employment. With the aid of the public administration they are to increase and to extend existing child-welfare measures. They are to recruit women for jobs which are natural to them, such as caring for the children of employed mothers, aiding and organizing children's recreation, agricultural brigade work, organizing playgrounds, caring for the appearance of buildings, etc. They are to cooperate closely with the schools and with the Societies of Parents and Friends of the School. They are to work in close harmony with the consumer cooperatives and to help develop political work in the sales outlets. In cooperation with the public administration, they are to see to the proper fulfillment of the part of the communal enterprises. The membership of the women's committees in the cities and in industrial obshchas are to represent the women in factories and consumer cooperatives, the most active women Communists, the most active trade-union members, and the intelligentsia.

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The objective of the women's committees will thus be to mobilize the masses of women to fulfill the resolutions of the party and the government, and to increase the political and cultural qualifications of women by systematic training, i.e., to conduct widespread mass political work. To fulfill this goal, the women's committees must have the full aid of the entire Communist Party. The party will assign objectives to the Communists working in the women's committees according to the party line, through the basic organizations and the Communists in the national committees.

The party organizations are to discuss the activity of the women's committees regularly and in great detail at their meetings and send their best women members to the women's committees. The principles of the new methods of party work among women are to be discussed in the krais and okrai party committees so that the new methods of party work among women will be discussed in the basic party organizations. The party organizations must actively aid the establishment of women's committees in local national committees.

Then Communists must see that party work among the women becomes a great movement. With the approval of the krai party committees, the referents for party work among women in the krai party committees are to convene conferences of Communist women from the okreses to discuss the future work of the women. At the same time, similar action groups of women Communists must be convened in the okreses. At these conferences and in these groups the Communist women will be informed in detail of the form of the reorganization of the procedure for establishing women's committees in the national committees, and of the participation of the women of the entire obec.

On the example of the Anti-Fascist Committee of Soviet Women, on 20 April 1952 the 80-member Committee of Czechoslovak Women was established as the representative of Czechoslovak women. Of this number, 25 members of the Slovak Committee make up the Committee of Czechoslovak Women in Slovakia.

The Committee of Czechoslovak Women, however, will not direct the women's committees in the national committees. This committee is the representative of Czechoslovak women in the international forum, and will represent Czechoslovak women in the International Federation of Democratic Women, send delegates abroad, and entertain foreign delegates in Czechoslovakia. It will organize all nationwide wide programs which concern women. It will issue a publication for cultural training activity, and will continue to publish the periodical Vlasta, in which it will give information on resolutions of the International Federation of Democratic Women and of the peace committee, as well as on various programs. Women from all krais of the Republic and from all sectors of work have been chosen for the Committee of Czechoslovak Women, which was appointed on 20 April 1952 at a nationwide conference of women.

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